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DGCA SEEKS DAILY REPORT AS VISTARA CANCELS MORE FLIGHTS

The directive comes as the Tata group airline cancelled over 50 flights for the second straight day on Tuesday due to non-availability of pilots

AIRLINE TOLD TO EASE PASSENGER WOES

The airline's daily report to the DGCA will have details of flights being cancelled and delayed. The aviation regulator said it is monitoring the situation to ensure the airline follows the norms and passengers are not inconvenienced. Pilots of Vistara, which is in the process of getting merged with Air India, have been protesting cuts to their fixed pay | P13

PILOTS REPORT SICK TO PROTEST PAY CUTS

- Several commanders and first officers of the airline's A320 fleet reported sick on Tuesday to protest the pay cuts. The cancellations come amid a surge in travel demand due to the onset of summer
- The new salary structure has been introduced to bring parity between pilots of Vistara and Air India as part of the merger

51.4%

VISTARA'S ON-TIME PERFORMANCE ON APR1, THE LOWEST AMONG SCHEDULED AIRLINES

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

CANDIDATES CHESS

SECRET SERVICE: PLAYERS SET FOR GRUELLING TIME

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

JUST before the 2013 World Chess Championship, Viswanathan Anand caused quite the stir by naming his seconds in the pre-event meet. "K Sasikiran, Sandipan (Chanda), (Radoslav) Wojtaszek and (Peter) Leko are my first seconds," the then defending champion had said.

The ball, then, was in Magnus Carlsen's court. Would the Norwegian return the favour by publically revealing his seconds? "I appreciate Mr Anand's openness about his team," he had said. "And I'm not going to return his favour." Normalcy was quickly restored for elite chess players seldom reveal the identity of their seconds before an important event.

For seconds are the army of backroom staffers working to bring home the title. Complete secrecy is the only name of the game. During an interaction with this daily, R B Ramesh, coach of R Vaishali and R Praggnanadhaa (the siblings will be in action at the Candidates from Thursday in Toronto), plead the Fifth whenever he felt it would be in danger of revealing details of the multiple camps they had in the lead up. He refused to even reveal the dates of the camp. "Don't want to go too much into the dates; I will just say we have done our bit," he said. "We have prepared professionally. Everyone will have done the same." It has since been reported that Praggnanandhaa, who qualified for the Candidates (an elite eight-player event which will identify the Challenger for the world title match) has hired Peter Svidler, a former World No. 4.

(From left): R Praggnanandhaa, R Vaishali and D Gukesh

V Saravanan, an IM who works at chess.com, takes this daily through why secrecy is important. "It's existed for a long time because you do not want to give your opponents the smallest of clues," he tells this daily. "Let's take Svidler's case. He's a legend for his Gruenfeld Defense with black pieces. He's known for his dynamism. Those are the kind of clues you don't want your opponents to know." The aspect of secrecy — almost akin to an espionage operation — isn't just unique to Ramesh.

Gukesh's coach, Vishnu Saravanan, also maintained silence when he was asked about the event (the 17-year-old will be helped by Grzegorz Gajweski during the meet). The IM explained further. "Gajewski is known to be an expert in openings (the first phase of the game)."

Koneru Humpy, one of two Indian women in the field, flat out refused to answer questions about the event. Vidit Gujrathi (one of three Indian men in the field) did of his two members ahead of the tournament (Surya Shekhar Ganguly and Daniele Vocaturo) but said he preferred to hide the identities of the others in the team. Candidates is a gruelling three week event with 14 games of Classical Chess. P15

AAP ka Sanjay gets bail after ED green light

SC says it shouldn't be treated as precedent, gags lawmaker

SUCHITRA MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Tuesday granted bail to Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, who was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with a money laundering case linked to Delhi excise policy scam.

During the hearing, Additional Solicitor General S V Raju appearing for the ED told the court that the probe agency has no objection if Singh is released on bail. "I am making the statement without going into the merits of the case and keeping all the rights and contentions open," Raju said. The bench had asked Raju to take instructions on whether the ED needed further custody of Singh.

"We allow the present appeal and direct that Sanjay Singh be released on bail during pendency of trial on terms and conditions set by the trial court," a two-judge bench of the court, headed by Justice Sanjiv Khanna said.

The court directed Singh not to make any comments about the case while on bail.

The bench further said the bail granted to Singh should not be treated as "precedent" and it will not be of much help to other jailed AAP leaders, including Arvind Kejriwal.

The ED arrested Singh in October. It had said Singh received proceeds of crime to the tune of ₹2 crore. During Tuesday's hearing, the bench told Raju no money has been recovered from Singh's possession and the bribe allegations can be tested in the trial. "Maybe a lot of time has passed but all this can be examined in trial and tested in a witness box," it said.

Reacting to the bail order, Singh's wife Anita Singh said her happiness is incomplete with three of her "brothers", Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, and Satyendar Jain, still behind bars.

Sanjay Singh

> **No money has been recovered from his possession and the ₹2 crore bribe allegations can be tested in the trial. There is no trace of it. Maybe a lot of time has passed but all this can be examined in trial**
>
> Supreme Court

BIG DAY FOR DEMOCRACY, SAYS AAP

Reacting to the Supreme Court's order granting bail to its Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Tuesday called it a "big day for democracy" and hoped the "mountain of lies" created by the BJP will collapse in the coming days. "This is a big day for democracy in the country and a moment of happiness and hope," senior party leader and Delhi minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said in a press conference.

State sought aid late, says Shah, Siddu hits back

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

UNION Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday alleged that the Congress government in Karnataka sent a memorandum late to the Centre for funds to tackle drought.

Addressing BJP workers at Shakti Kendra Pramukh Sammelan here, Shah said when Karnataka is reeling under severe drought, people in the government caused a delay in submitting the memorandum by three months. The memorandum is now before the Election Commission, he said, denying the allegation that the Centre refused to release funds to the state.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda hit back at Shah alleging that he lied blatantly that the state government caused a delay in submitting the memorandum. They claimed that the state submitted three memorandums to the Centre, but no relief came.

Shah said Congress leaders in the state are now politicising the issue in view of Lok Sabha elections. The party in power seems not to be keen on resolving the problems of the people. It is not working for the development of the state. "In Karnataka, the CM is only keen on saving his chair from the DCM," he added.

Siddaramaiah, who took to 'X', reminded Shah of the efforts made by his government to get funds from the Centre.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah at the BJP meeting at Palace Grounds on Tuesday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

The revenue minister, who addressed a press conference, alleged Shah's statement is politically motivated. He reminded Shah that he along with Agriculture Minister N Chaluvarayaswamy even met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman on November 24, 2023, and held discussions with her. Though she responded positively, the state did not get funds.

Later, he and the CM met the PM and submitted a proposal for Rs 18,177.44 crore. "But Shah lied that the state delayed in submitting the memorandum. It was only then the state approached the SC, seeking its direction to the Centre to release funds," Byre Gowda said. MORE: P4

EXPRESS READ

Bengaluru sizzles at 37.2°C, highest so far this year

Bengaluru: The city recorded a maximum temperature of 37.2 degrees Celsius on Tuesday, making it the highest so far this year. The Kempegowda International Airport recorded a maximum of 37.3 degrees Celsius. P2

Ramdev 'apology' humbug, says SC, seeks fresh reply

SUCHITRA KALYAN MOHANTY @ New Delhi

THE Supreme Court on Tuesday came down heavily on Patanjali Ayurved for putting out misleading advertisements to promote its products and running down modern medicine. A bench headed by Justice Hima Kohli also refused to accept the apology tendered by the firm's founder Baba Ramdev and managing director Acharya Balkrishna but gave the company one last chance to file its response within a week and fixed the matter for further hearing on April 10.

Both Ramdev and Balkrishna were present before the bench on Tuesday, in compliance with an order for their personal presence in court. Ramdev tendered unconditional apology before the bench, also comprising Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah, for violating the order restraining the firm from issuing misleading advertisements, but the court was annoyed by the phraseology of the affidavit submitted by Balkrishna.

"This is all humbug. You say 'if the court feels, etc'... We cannot look into your heart! This is not how contempt cases are dealt with," the bench said. The bench also warned the duo that it would take note of 'perjury' as certain documents, which were said to be attached with other papers, were created later on. "This is a clear case of perjury. We are not closing the doors on you but we are telling all that we have noted," it said.

10 Maoists killed in Chhattisgarh

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

AT least 10 members of the outlawed CPI (Maoist), including a female cadre, were on Tuesday killed in an exchange of fire with the security forces in Bijapur district, Chhattisgarh, about 350 km south of Raipur.

So far, 10 bodies have been recovered. Several other Maoists are suspected to have sustained injuries, said Sundarraj P, Bastar range inspector general of police. Intensive search operation continues in the region.

One light machine gun, a Barrel Grenade Launcher (BGL), a .303 bore rifle, huge quantities of BGL shells and other ammunition were recovered. Most of those killed were likely from Platoon No. 2 of the People's Liberation Guerrilla Army of the Maoists.

BIG RECOGNITION

The Vatican reaches out to Kannadigas in Kannada

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

KANNADA is a now global language. On Tuesday, it became the 53rd language of Vatican media and Vatican Radio – Vatican News. The Vatican said, "From Tuesday, news in this language spoken by millions in India will be available on the Vatican News web portal. It is a collaborative initiative by the Dicastery for Communication and the Archdiocese of Bangalore, in the Indian state of Karnataka."

Preparations were on for this project for about 24 months, according to Fr Cyril Victor, who is the communications head of The Archdiocese of Bangalore. "The past three months have been intense and finally, we had the launch on Tuesday," he said.

Bangalore Archbishop Peter Machado said, "We are very happy that the Vatican has recognised Kannada as one of its languages. This will be useful for the people of Karnataka. Until now, the Vatican broadcast in Malayalam, Tamil and Hindi. Kannada is the fourth Indian language to be introduced. There are more protocols to post information here than regular government channels. In the Vatican, there is a radio station set up by Marconi, the inventor of radio, in 1931. It functions to this day."

Fr Cyril Victor said, "We have a team of about six people here who work round-the-clock to ensure the updates are made available in Kannada. Translation is extremely meticulous and there is no scope for errors." Asked if other Indian languages will be included, he said there are plans to introduce Bengali, Marathi and Telugu. P5

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS GROUP
KARNATAKA Dialogues
THERE ARE YEARS THAT ASK QUESTIONS, AND YEARS THAT ANSWER...
This year, we aim to get both...together during
Express Dialogues - Karnataka
A Mini Conclave on the eve of the 18th Lok Sabha Elections, featuring a distinguished panel of thinkers, writers, and political analysts along with senior editors of The New Indian Express.
SESSION 1
WAITING FOR SHIVA...THE HINDUTVA NARRATIVE
3.30-4.30pm
Discussion: Dr. Vikram Sampath, Author with Santwana Bhattacharya, Editor, The New Indian Express (TNIE) Group and Nirad G Mudur, Deputy Resident Editor, TNIE-Karnataka
Date: April 3, 2024
Time: 3pm to 7pm
Venue: The Capitol Hotel, Raj Bhavan Road
SESSION 2
DYNAMICS OF INDIA'S SOCIO-POLITICAL SCENE
4.40-5.40pm
PANELLISTS
Chandan Gowda, Academician; Sandeep Shastri, Director-Academics, NITTE Education Trust; BS Murthy, Political Analyst; Samhita Arni, Writer.
Moderated by Ramu Patil, Senior Associate Editor and Bansy Kalappa, Political Editor, TNIE-Karnataka
SESSION 3
TO THE POLLS & AFTER
5.45-6.45pm
Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar
in conversation with Santwana Bhattacharya, Editor, TNIE Group and Ramu Patil, Senior Associate Editor, TNIE-Karnataka
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